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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; May 11, 2009

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DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

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North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the  
Fatherland, in a May 9 statement, claimed, "There simply is no need  
to even consider holding talks between the two Koreas while the Lee  
Myung-bak group is publicly trying to smear the name of our republic  
and bluntly denying it." (All)

This statement, coming amid reports that the second inter-Korean  
government-level talks might be held as early as this week, is  
casting doubt on whether the second meeting will actually take place  
and, particularly, on the prospects of discussing the (situation of

the) ROK worker who has been detained in the Kaesong Industrial Complex in the North. (Chosun, Hankook, Hankyoreh, Segye, Seoul, all TVs)

#### MEDIA ANALYSIS

##### -North Korea - Special Envoy Bosworth's Visit

On Saturday (May 9), the ROK media gave wide play to U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth's May 8 arrival in Seoul as part of a visit to the region to discuss the North Korean nuclear issue with regional partners.

Ambassador Bosworth was widely quoted as telling a press conference in Seoul: "If the North Koreans decide to carry out a second nuclear test, we will deal with the consequences of that. And there will be consequences." The Ambassador was further quoted: "The door to dialogue (with North Korea) is always open. We're also prepared to deal with North Korea on a bilateral basis, but in a way that reinforces the multilateral (Six-Party) process."

In a related development, left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun today cited experts as commenting that (Ambassador Bosworth's visit) was significant in that it was part of a process to exchange views among concerned parties on the need and the timing for U.S.-North Korea talks but that the visit fell far short of making a breakthrough in easing heightening tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

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Hankyoreh also quoted a senior ROKG official as saying on May 10 that Washington and Seoul are considering the timing of U.S.-North Korea talks, which should be scheduled at an appropriate time to avoid any appearance of giving in to the North's recent harsh rhetoric.

The North Korean Foreign Ministry's May 8 statement - accusing the Obama Administration of harboring a hostile policy toward Pyongyang - also received wide press coverage today. An unnamed North Korean Foreign Ministry Spokesman was quoted as telling the official (North) Korean Central News Agency: "There is nothing to be gained by sitting down together with a party that continues to view us with hostility. The DPRK will bolster its nuclear deterrent as it has already clarified." Most ROK media viewed this North Korean statement as timed to coincide with Ambassador Bosworth's visit to Seoul.

The ROK media also gave attention to a May 9 statement by North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland which claimed, "There simply is no need to even consider holding talks between the two Koreas while the Lee Myung-bak group is publicly trying to smear the name of our republic and bluntly denying it."

This statement, coming amid reports that the second inter-Korean government-level talks might be held as early as this week, is casting doubt on whether the second meeting will actually take place and, particularly, on the prospects of discussing the (situation of the) ROK worker who has been detained in the Kaesong Industrial Complex in the North, according to media reports. Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo speculated that the North Korean statement might have been intended to gain the upper hand in the upcoming inter-Korean talks.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo editorialized today: "It is high time to think seriously whether it is appropriate to prolong this deadlocked situation (on North Korea). No one knows for sure what such an unpredictable country as North Korea will do in isolation, and the North will not change its behavior even if we wait (for it to change). There is also very little likelihood of North Korea buckling under international sanctions. For this very reason, the U.S. and the ROK should discuss how to manage this deadlocked situation and share a strategy for dealing with a situation after this impasse."

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized: "If North Korea continues to make provocations, thereby narrowing the room for negotiations, international calls for sanctions on it will continue to grow. In order to turn this situation around, the U.S. should promptly conclude its review of North Korea policy and engage in high-level talks with North Korea. If the U.S. and North Korea simply speak at cross purposes like they are doing these days, we cannot avoid aggravating the situation."

#### OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

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PRECONDITIONS FOR DISCUSSIONS ON TROOP DEPLOYMENT TO AFGHANISTAN  
(JoongAng Ilbo, May 11, 2009, Page 42)

By Deputy Political Affairs Editor Kang Chan-ho

Troop deployment to Afghanistan will be the biggest item on the agenda in the U.S.-ROK summit scheduled for June 16. However, President Lee Myung-bak should not reach a compromise deal linking troop deployment (to Afghanistan) to the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) issue or to North Korea policy, but should (focus on) building trust. The key mission should be to solidify the 6-decade alliance between two countries. A solution to the Afghanistan issue should be sought after working-level officials from both countries understand each other's position.

What President Lee Myung-bak should pay the most attention to is the

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communication with the political circles, particularly, the opposition party. President Lee should leave all possibilities including troop deployment open and persuade the public. The opposition party should remember that when it held the reins of power, it sent troops to Iraq and Afghanistan for national interest against opposition from its political base. The opposition party should cooperate open-mindedly.

Lawmakers should meet with U.S. officials and politicians individually and show their interest in the Afghanistan issue. This 'parliamentary diplomacy' will be very meaningful. However, the reality is regrettable. Among more than 100 lawmakers who left for Europe, Asia and Africa, few have shown interest in the Afghanistan issue. They dub their trip abroad 'parliamentary diplomacy.' What they call 'parliamentary diplomacy' will end up as merely a 'parliamentary trip' if they turn a blind eye to important pending issues.

SEOUL, WASHINGTON NEED NEW N. KOREA STRATEGY  
(Chosun Ilbo, May 11, page 35, 2009)

The North Korean Foreign Ministry in a statement on Friday said its study of the policies of the Obama Administration for the past 100 days "made it clear that the U.S. hostile policy toward North Korea remains unchanged."

It said there was "nothing to be gained by sitting down together with a party that continues to view us with hostility." Instead, North Korea issued the usual threat to "bolster its nuclear deterrent." After all this time trying to force direct talks with the U.S., the North is now denouncing dialogue as pointless.

Washington is also stubborn. Stephen Bosworth, Special Representative for North Korea Policy, said Friday there is not much the U.S. can do to prevent Pyongyang from conducting a second nuclear test, but added, "If the North Koreans decide to carry out a second nuclear test, we will deal with the consequences of that. And there will be consequences." The remarks were made with stronger UN Security Council sanctions against the North in mind.

Asked if she intends to visit Pyongyang in a bid to resolve the stalemate with North Korea, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton flatly replied Thursday, "No." U.S. President Barack Obama's coordinator for weapons of mass destruction policy, Gary Saymore,

said a while ago, "It's very clear that the North Koreans want to pick a fight," and that his government will "just wait" until North Korea returns to the dialogue.

This series of remarks by senior U.S. government officials indicates that Washington will adopt a "pressure and (ignore)" tactic for the time being. The Obama Administration intends to concentrate on the economic crisis; on international issues it is focused on Afghanistan. North Korea's antics, it believes, can hardly threaten the U.S. right away.

All in all, it's become difficult for the North to pursue past tactics of forcing Washington to the negotiation table. Views in the U.S. are that the Six-Party talks on North Korea's nuclear disarmament or bilateral Washington-Pyongyang talks may not be held this year. If the North conducts a second nuclear test, China and Russia will find it difficult to shield Pyongyang at the UN Security Council as they did when the North fired a long-range missile in April. Chances are that an additional nuclear test will result in greater isolation and harsher sanctions for North Korea. Diplomatic circles say the North, accustomed to its past practices, has made a misjudgment. It would be wiser to accept, even now, the Obama Administration's offer of bilateral dialogue rather than treading this uncertain path that demands sacrifices from the entire North Korean population.

It is North Korea's fault that the U.S. is ready to endure the current stalemate. Despite the Obama Administration's offer of direct dialogue, North Korea has made a series of provocations

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including the long-range missile launch. Washington feels that the North should be made to pay a price before dialogue is resumed. The North's strategy of dealing directly with the U.S. and freezing out the ROK has brought about its own isolation instead. However, it is high time to think seriously whether it is appropriate to prolong this deadlocked situation (on North Korea.) No one knows for sure what such an unpredictable country as North Korea will do in isolation, and the North will not change its behavior even if we wait (for it to change). There is also very little likelihood of North Korea buckling under international sanctions.

For this very reason, the U.S. and the ROK should discuss how to manage this deadlock and share a strategy for dealing with a situation after this impasse. They should use diplomatic means to enable the other members of the Six-Party Talks -- China, Japan and Russia -- to participate in the process. Only then will we be able to prevent Pyongyang from committing irrevocable provocations and (be able to) resolve the problems by effectively persuading and pressuring North Korea in the future.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

LOCATING AN EXIT TO NORTH KOREA NUCLEAR ISSUE STALEMATE  
(Hankyoreh Shinmun, May 11, page 23, 2009)

It has been close to four months since U.S. President Barack Obama took office and efforts to resolve the North Korea nuclear issue, including the restart of the Six-Party Talks, have not escaped stalemate. Moreover, it does not appear that inter-Korean issues are improving. In short, we find ourselves in a rather frustrating situation, with regards to North Korea-related issues, in which there is no way out.

U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth, who is on his second tour of Six-Party Talks nations since his appointment, is leaving the ROK without having made any clear gains. He said he would continue to work to get North Korea back to the Six-Party Talks, but he reportedly did not put forward a plan to make that happen. Like his last tour, he did not visit North Korea or meet with high-ranking North Korean officials. Indeed, North Korea declared on Friday, the day Ambassador Bosworth arrived in the ROK, that there was no change that they could discern in the U.S.'s hostile policy towards them, even under President Obama, and that

Pyongyang would continue to work on strengthening its nuclear deterrent. The statement issued during Ambassador Bosworth's second tour basically reconfirmed a statement made by a North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesperson on April 29, in which North Korea declared it would conduct a second nuclear test, test fire an intercontinental ballistic missile or develop uranium enrichment technology.

In response to the ROKG raising the issue of North Korea's human rights record, North Korea's Committee for the Peaceful Reunification of the Fatherland took a hardline approach and said Friday that there was no need to engage in inter-Korean dialogue. The committee even coarsely condemned the ROK's response to North Korea's detainment of a South Korean Hyundai Asan employee. Accordingly, there are growing predictions that, despite the impending second round of inter-Korean governmental talks concerning the Kaesong (Gaeseong) Industrial Complex, this issue will not be resolved easily.

It is unclear whether this is part of North Korea's strategy to go on its own path until it is recognized as a nuclear state, or brinkmanship intended to maximize Pyongyang's bargaining power with Washington. Regardless of which it is, what is clear is that it is putting up obstacles to resolving the nuclear issue. If North Korea continues to make provocations, thereby narrowing the room for negotiations, international calls for sanctions on it will continue to grow.

In order to turn this situation around, the U.S. should promptly

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conclude its review of North Korea policy and engage in high-level talks with North Korea. If the U.S. and North Korea simply speak at cross purposes like they are doing these days, we cannot avoid aggravating the situation. The ROKG meanwhile must both substantively support North Korea-U.S. dialogue and take a concrete approach to North Korea that can change the basic framework of inter-Korean relations.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

#### FEATURES

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BOSWORTH SAYS THERE IS NOT MUCH TO DO  
(Chosun Ilbo, May 9, 2009, Page 6)

Ambassador Stephen Bosworth, the U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Policy said that many things have happened since his visit last March but little has changed.

Ambassador Bosworth made this remark during his meeting with Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan. This remark apparently indicates his anxiety (over the current situation). The issue of North Korean denuclearization has been deadlocked for months. Also, the prospect of resuming the Six-Party Talks remains uncertain. North Korea rejected Ambassador Bosworth's offer in March to visit the North. Moreover, in time for Ambassador Bosworth's visit to the ROK, North Korea issued a harsh statement saying there is no need for negotiations with the U.S.,

There is not much (for the U.S.) to do.

Special Representative Bosworth arrived in the ROK after his visit to China. He met with Minister Yu, Senior Presidential Secretary for Foreign Affairs and National Security Kim Sung-hwan, and ROK's Chief Delegate to the Six-Party Talks Wi Sung-lac and discussed ways to bring North Korea back to the negotiating table. However, he failed to come up with specific solutions.

During a press conference, when asked what specific plans (the U.S.) has to improve the Six-Party Talks, Ambassador Bosworth said that for now (the U.S.) has no specific plans. He added that should North Korea go ahead with a second nuclear test, there will be

consequences. Meanwhile, he noted that there is not much the U.S. can do to prevent the North from carrying out a nuclear test.

Ambassador Bosworth's statements are very different from those of Christopher Hill, the former Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs and former chief negotiator for the Six-Party Talks.

Ambassador Hill liked to use the media by employing extravagant diplomatic language. However, Ambassador Bosworth expressed directly that the current situation is difficult.

An (ROK) diplomatic official said that Ambassador Bosworth's visit is focused on assessing the current situation and sharing understanding with regional partners in how to respond in the future rather than devising an immediate solution.

Bilateral talks will be held within the Six-Party Talks.

Ambassador Bosworth said that the Six-Party Talks are at the heart of U.S. efforts in dealing with the North Korean nuclear issue. He made clear that, for now, the U.S. is not considering an alternative to the Six-Party Talks. He repeatedly emphasized that the door to dialogue is open. Also, he noted that the U.S. is prepared to deal with North Korea bilaterally, but in a way that reinforces the Six-Party Talks. Meanwhile, he denied the possibility of the U.S. and North Korea having bilateral talks outside of the Six-Party Talks framework.

Ambassador Bosworth mainly discussed two options during a series of meetings with the ROK and China. One was China's sending an envoy

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to North Korea to persuade North Korea (to return to the Six Party Talks.) Another was that the ROK, China, Russia and Japan, with the exception of North Korea, may hold a separate meeting to deliver a united message calling for the North to return to the Six-Party Talks, thereby pressuring North Korea.

Chief Delegate Wi Sung-lac did not deny the possibility that China may send an envoy to North Korea, saying that consultations between North Korea and China could benefit the Six-Party Talks. Also, an ROK government official noted that China was vehemently opposed to the Five-Party Talks (before) but apparently has changed its position.

Ambassador Bosworth will pay a courtesy visit to former President Kim Dae-jung on May 9th. He will stay in the ROK through the weekend and then leave for Japan on May 11th.

ROK SENIOR OFFICIAL: U.S. TO NEITHER SEND HIGH-LEVEL ENVOY TO DPRK, NOR TAKE STEPS TO REVIVE SIX-PARTY TALKS (Yonhap, May 10, 2009)

The U.S. administration of President Barack Obama does not intend to send a high-level envoy to North Korea or take any other steps to revive the Six-Party talks on the communist nation's nuclear program, a senior ROKG official said Sunday.

The U.S. believes that it has done enough to convey its willingness to engage in both bilateral and multilateral talks with the defiant North and that it is time for Pyongyang to give an answer, according to the official.

"There can be progress in dialogue only when a partner responds (to proposals for talks) and shows interest," the official said in a background briefing for reporters on the results of consultations with Ambassador Stephen Bosworth, Obama's special envoy on North Korea. Ambassador Bosworth arrived in Seoul on Friday for a series of meetings with top ROK officials, including Foreign Minister Yu Myung-hwan (Yu Myo'ng-hwan), Unification Minister Hyun In-taek and top nuclear negotiator Wi So'ng-rak (Wi Sung-lac).

As North Korea is aware of Washington's willingness for dialogue, the official added, it would be "rational" to take a wait and see approach.

"If North Korea is interested in dialogue, it will respond," he

said.

Ambassador Bosworth, on a tour of Northeast Asia to discuss ways to resume the denuclearization process, openly acknowledged that Washington is willing to talk with Pyongyang. State Department spokesman Robert Wood also said in a press briefing on Friday that the U.S. "is prepared to deal with North Korea bilaterally in a way that reinforces the multilateral process."

The U.S. has also expressed its willingness to talk with North Korea on several occasions through its diplomatic mission at the United Nations, known as the "New York" channel. But the North remains unresponsive.

The official said Ambassador Bosworth and ROK officials reviewed the current situation but did not discuss any new specific initiative to persuade the North to return to the bargaining table.

He said the current stalemate will continue unless Pyongyang changes its attitude.

North Korea has threatened to conduct a second nuclear test and pursue a uranium enrichment program in anger over the U.N. Security Council's condemnation of its April 5 rocket launch.

"With regard to the nuclear test issue, we have no information on any concrete move," the official said.

The ROK and the U.S. made clear that the North will face

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"consequences" if it presses ahead with additional provocative steps including another nuclear test.

1N. KOREA THREATENS TO `BOLSTER NUCLEAR DETERRENT`  
(Dong-a Ilbo, May 9, 2009)

North Korea yesterday said it will bolster its nuclear deterrent since the U.S. has not changed its hostile policy toward the North.

A North Korean Foreign Ministry spokesman said, "We have closely watched the policies of the Obama Administration for the past 100 days since its inauguration. Now, it is clear that the hostile U.S. policy toward us has not changed at all. As previously stated, we will bolster our nuclear deterrent."

Answering a question from a journalist on the North's state-run Korea Central News Agency, the spokesman said, "U.S. President Barack Obama argued that we should be punished for our rocket launch, while describing the peaceful satellite launch as acts of defiance and provocation. Also, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has labeled our regime a despotic or rogue government like her predecessors."

"The essence of the U.S. government's hostile policy toward us is its attempt to destroy the thoughts and system adopted by our people. We cannot gain anything even if we sit face to face with a nation that has continuously taken a hostile attitude toward us."

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

STANTON